/354 cont./

372 small stick was too short to be handled with ease, he fastened it securely to another stick by means of vegetable fibers (embira) (Fig. 25). This done, he sat down on the ground, pressing the soles of his feet on the small cupped stick, and imparted with the palms of the hands a rotating movement to the other stick. The glowing sawdust which was detached by the effect of the friction fell on dried dung placed near the gadget to serve as tinder, which, at the end of a rather short time, began to catch fire.

• 354

According to the season, the Chiriguano light their fires inside the hut or outside. The hearth is composed of long branches which they lay out like the spokes of a wheel. As the ends burn, they push them closer to the central fire. The job of getting the dead wood falls within the province of the men (Fig. 26).

[462] [313]

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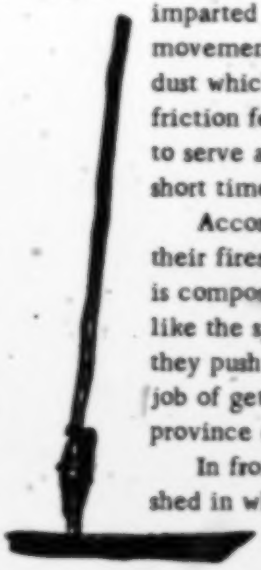
In front of the huts they often erect a little shed in which the women do the cooking. The



[372] ← Fig. 25. Ancient apparatus for making fire, reconstructed by a modern Chiriguano. Prov.: Caruruti. (1/6 nat. size.)

roof of this shelter serves as a shelf for putting provisions and utensils on.

Preparation of Food

262 The modern Chiriguano do not seem to observe any food prohibitions, at least in daily life, for the custom of fasting, for women at the time of puberty and for men upon the birth of a child, is not yet lost. In olden days certain animals /355/ were taboo (1). The men of a few villages thus reserved for themselves

[789] [825]

[775] 1. In order not to kill one of their dead relatives transformed into a fox, the Chiriguano

/471 cont./

353 and 127). Everything in the world can be found there: small vessels, baskets, boxes, packages carefully wrapped in cloth, in short, a thousand little objects which the Chiriguano women regard as their treasure. From the roof hang hooks from which [414] are suspended household effects or supplies. These hooks are [237] generally of wood, but there are some also which are formed by a deer foot bent back and dried in the sun (Fig. 128).

Every chink in the walls is transformed into a hiding-place where the women put their scissors, the men their knives or combs. /472/ Bows and arrows are slipped between the struts of the roof.

In some huts whose walls are plastered with earth, the Indians arrange niches in the shape of swallows' nests, which serve as rudimentary cupboards. Might there be in that a distant remembrance of the niches so characteristic of Inca houses? It is possible.

352 The inhabitants of each hut sit on the cots or on /Figs. 516 130-132 appear here/ chairs with backs very well copied from [199] those of the creoles. The women generally squat on the ground. [198] On the upper Pilcomayo, one still finds benches with two seats (Fig. 129), a cultural element which the Chiriguano inherited from their ancestors of the Amazon basin.

356 The fire for cooking is lighted in the middle of the hut. • [354] Chiriguano dwellings are clean. I have never caught fleas or other vermin there as I have in the ranchos of creoles or half-breeds. The women sweep their huts at least once a day. One is rarely disturbed there by mice (Fig. 132).

/169 cont./

In both cases the ranchos which had been formed were left destroyed, despite the fact that the latter, because they had been built under the direction of the missionary, were quite comfortable, new, and /170/ well covered with red straw /paja colorada/, which is the best for the construction of ranchos.

The Chiriguano Indian does not do this. He also on occasion suffers from a scarcity of supplies, because the land on which he lives produces harvests only when there is no lack of rain. In times of scarcity he bars the door of his house with poles or thorns, temporarily leaves his town, and goes off to distant lands in search of food, gets it, and brings it to his home, but he does not emigrate en masse, nor does he build temporary huts in a foreign place or town, and if he has any relatives in the places where there is abundant food, he seeks them out and is welcomed and well treated by them. He remains there for weeks and even months, until his fellows are tired of him, and then he takes his leave, taking the little food that is offered to him as something precious, and in fact it is in times of hunger.

Chiriguano towns are small, consisting of a few houses, most of them not exceeding 20 or 30 houses; these are large and in each one there are up to three families, but close relatives, such as father and married son and married daughter; they form a square and are so situated as to enclose the little plaza. They are not pretty, but they are clean; they are not large, but neither are they as small as those of some towns of the whites. These Chiriguano towns are poor; it is hard to find in them houses with tiles, but they are comfortable, with the roofs, as will be said, having the necessary slope so that they do not readily admit drips (1).

1. In the upper part of the house they make a long, continuous opening to allow the smoke to escape; it is made in such a way that it does not allow water to come in during the rainy season.

/172 cont./

342 R4 The hardest part is finished with the previous operation: a short rest is taken, and then the owner of the new building must obtain enough hollow cane, engaging for this purpose Indians who have horses. But if the cane is very far away and has owners to boot, he gathers long sticks of astringent acacia or sehil and puts them horizontally every 15 centimeters on top of the rafters with the same above-mentioned lianas. Some [283] people, to tie the cane or sticks, use thin cords made from cowhide, but this, in addition to being more expensive, is less durable than bejuco (1).

[137] [198] [423]

1. Before the whites settled in Chiriguano country, hollow cane was abundant and had no owners; at the present time it cannot be found, and, if there is any, it is in private hands and must be bought.

Generally, before the walls are begun the house is covered with capií, red straw, or, should this not be available, with capiáncua, straw for harnesses of beasts of burden, which is of inferior quality and very soon frays to pieces with the rain, sun, and strong winds, while the capií may last for more than ten years.

[496] If it can be obtained by staying for a few days in a place where it is plentiful, he pulls it up there and reduces it to rather large handfuls; the gathering is done in several days, engaging Indians who own horses. When the material is in the town, he rests for a few days or weeks; he informs or invites those who wish to take part, in particular those who are closest to him by [354] kinship or friendship. These then go about tying the capií between two horizontal canes toward the side of the roots, forming long, narrow lines, and when they are so placed, they attach them horizontally, beginning at the bottom and working /173/ upward or toward the ridgepole, where they leave a large vent to let out the eternal smoke of their inextinguishable fires (1).

1. Now the red straw is disappearing almost completely; the destruction of this necessary

/177 cont./

Fire

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In conical houses as well as in those of rectangular form, ancient as well as modern, a fire burned, and still burns, night and day; it is never extinguished, but should this happen, the way to relight it is to borrow it from the neighbors. If all the inhabitants of a tribe have temporarily emigrated to a place which is not far away, as happens at the time of general planting, at the end of the harvest, and upon returning to town, they come back bringing their fire with them, as I have seen on repeated occasions. But as today civilization has penetrated and the match has become common, even the Chiriguano will save up one medio, or ten centavos, to buy such a useful combustible, which they use very sparingly, because in their hands this is now a luxury and lends them an air when in a gathering of companions they can bring out and show their box of matches while lighting a maize-husk cigar.

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[435]
[296]

When a fire happens to go out in a place where it is difficult to get it from distant houses, the Chiriguano is not too worried. The man is almost never without a flint, tinder, and a piece of steel; these implements are used to obtain new fire. The tinder is prepared by them from a boll of wild cotton or the flower of the samuu, which they reduce into a skein of thread and put into a cow's horn, which they clear at the wider end, fitting to it a wooden stopper that they keep down with a small wire or agave string; inside the tinder box it extends to the other end, where they make a small hole in order to be able to pull the wire or string and keep the top on tight.

372

The Indian who does not have all this apparatus does not worry much either. If his fire happens to go out, he makes a small conical hole in a piece of well-dried wood, in which he violently spins a small cylindrical stick, also dry, which does not take long to get hot and then to give off sparks of fire, to which he then applies the tinder, which consists of the dry pith either of the agave or of the /178/ maguey, which when it has taken fire will light any other combustible material (1).

[973]

1. When the toad handed over fire to the two

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/176 cont./ of the daughters, who, during the betrothal and at the beginning of the marriage, live with the mother-in-law. In front of the hut is the large hearth (Ill. 83) where the maize beer, and sometimes also the food, is cooked. /Fig. 84b appears here./ Inside the hut there is likewise a hearth where cooking is done and where one seeks warmth on cold nights and days.

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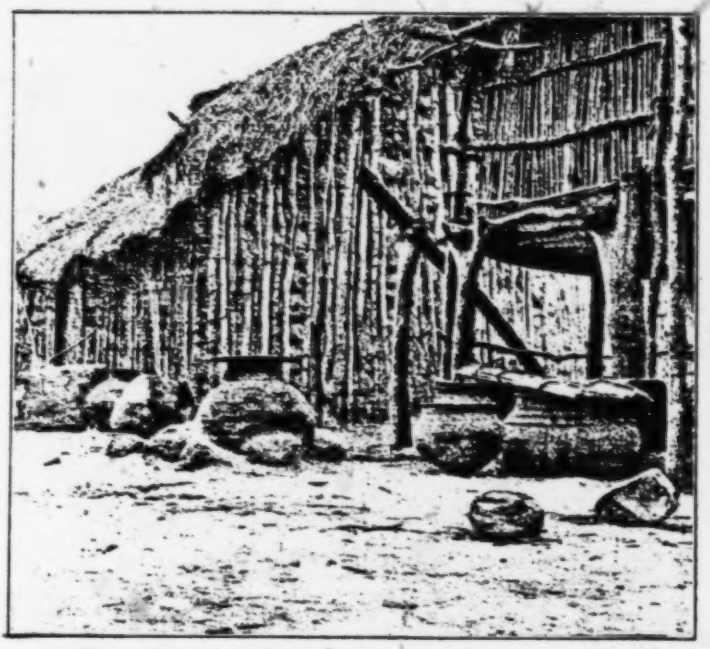

Fig. 83. Hearth for boiling maize beer. Chané village. Rio Itiyuro. To the right in the picture, large vessels in which the maize beer ferments. The house is plastered with earth.

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I have slept in these huts many a night. They are, as a rule, free of vermin, which cannot be said of the dwellings of all other Indians and of the houses of the whites. The sleeping place either consists of a bed made of a species of bamboo cane, or one lies /Plate 16 appears here/ /177/ on the ground on a reed mat or a skin. One also sees hammocks in the huts.

7:Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SF10 Chiriguano SF10

experiment carried out at Rockelstad in the summer of 1919[1], the »stone-age men» soon found themselves compelled to build a »lave» so that the goats should not damage such foodstuffs and implements as had to be kept outside the hut.[2]

It is my belief that the »lave» has also supplied the idea of building dwelling-houses on pole-supports. Wherever people in a certain stage of civilization have found themselves settled on solid ground, they have had need of raised food-platforms, partly for keeping their foodstuffs safe from damage on the part of domestic as well as noxious animals, partly for the purpose of drying, smoking or roasting the food (see pp. 38, 47 and 48). If such a people, living on the edge of a lake or a swamp, had wished — for defensive purposes or some other reason — to build their dwelling-huts or other buildings in the water, then, if the bottom of the lake afforded good holding for piles, such buildings would have been constructed in the same way as the food-platforms or pole-supported granaries previously employed on firm ground (compare fig. 28 with fig. 115). Where the people in question has been lacking in sufficient skill to construct large pile-buildings in the water, or if the lake bottom was unsuited to this mode of construction, then huts were built on rafts or quagmire islands, after the manner of the swamp dwellers of Alvastra and Bangweolo.[3]

The furnishing of the Chiriguano huts is exceedingly plain. The fire-place, which forms a very necessary heating centre at night during the cold season, consists of a few stones serving as supports for the cooking pots. There is no hole in the roof for letting out the smoke, which has to find its way out through the doorway or through fissures in the walls. As a rule, the food is generally cooked on a fire outside the hut (fig. 189).

Bedsteads of the type seen in fig. 190 are to be found in nearly every hut. These bed frames are made of laths or reeds, and are covered with skins. Nordenskiöld states as his opinion that the idea of these bedsteads has not been borrowed from the civilization of the whites.[4] In the analytical treatise he has written upon this question he adduces conclusive arguments for his opinion, as it seems to me. In Central Africa, one finds bedsteads that are very similar to the Indian ones,[5] and that certainly have not

[1] Klein, pp. 88—89.
[2] Klein (1).
[3] For lake- and marsh dwelling-places in different parts of the world, see Montelius (1).
[4] Nordenskiöld (12), pp. 8—12.
[5] von Rosen (4), p. 403.

352 [114] [171] [513] been imitated from the Europeans. The Chiriguano also sleep in hammocks made of cotton yarn, and on reed mats and skins spread on the ground. Stools for sitting on I have not observed among the Chiriguano. They do, however, possess such articles of furniture,[1] which, however, must be of 353 considerable rarity. Along the walls of the hut will be seen an orderly 415 array of cooking and roasting pots, water pitchers, and pots for maize [531] beer, arranged in rows, often of exceedingly beautiful shape and with painted decoration (figs. 217—225). From wooden hooks in the roof are hanging bunches of maize cobs, pumpkins or other foodstuffs; arrows, bows, and other gear. From the roof there are also suspended clay bowls (figs. 224 and 225), used as repositories for smaller articles of value. Clothing, ornaments, and such like, are also stored in large clay jars placed on the ground. As bowls there are also used the scaly skin of armadillos, and calabashes (fig. 226).

[352] → [291] [302] [411] [415] ← [237] [824] →

● 354 →

Fig. 194. Man and young woman. Chiriguano. San Luis. Bolivia. Photo. E. v. R.

Outside every hut there is, as I mentioned, a fireplace which is generally used for cooking the food, unless the weather makes this im- 356 possible. The huts, as well as the open spaces between them, are kept particularly neat and clean. They are swept every day, and the sweepings are burnt. The huts are practically always free from vermin.

291 [177] The Chiriguano men nowadays generally wear shirt and trousers of European cut (fig. 194). The poncho shirt is, however, still to be met with among this tribe[2], but only very rarely, and I have never personally

[1] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 163 and fig. 85 (12), pp. 15 and 16, and fig. 3.
[2] Nordenskiöld (12), p. 59.